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Prefix power

Add a prefix to the front of a word to change its meaning.

1 Learn



A **prefix** is a group of letters added to the **start** of a word. Each prefix has its own meaning, like a magic potion that changes the word!

un-	dis-	mis-	re-	pre-	sub-
not, or the opposite	**not, or the opposite**	**wrongly, badly**	**again, or back**	**before**	**under, below**
unkind, unlock	disagree, dislike	misspell, misbehave	rewrite, return	preheat, preview	submarine, subway

mis + **spell** = **misspell** to spell **wrongly**

1. Find the **root word**: spell.
2. Look at the **prefix**: mis- means wrongly.
3. Put the meanings together: misspell means **to spell something wrongly**.
4. Keep **all** the letters: mis + spell has two s's, so **misspell**.

Flip's tip: adding a prefix never changes the spelling of the root word. Just stick it on the front: dis + appear = disappear, un + necessary = unnecessary (two n's!).

Warm up: add **un-** or **re-** to make a real word.

☐ happy ☐ build ☐ fair ☐ fill

Grown-ups: un-, dis-, mis-, re- and sub- are on the Year 3 and 4 spelling list. un- and dis- both mean "not", so children have to learn which one goes with which word.

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2 Try it together a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



Kitchen prefix hunt

You need: packets, boxes and tins from the cupboard, any leaflets or letters, and a pencil.

1. Look at the words on the packets and leaflets. Hunt for words that start with un-, dis-, mis-, re-, pre- or sub-.
2. For each one, cover the prefix with your finger. Is the word underneath a real word? (In "recycle", cycle is.)
3. Say what the whole word means using the prefix's meaning.
4. Write your best finds in the table.

Word	Prefix	Root word	What it means

Grown-ups: common finds: preheat, recycle, reseal, unwrap, unsalted, reuse, discard. Not every word starting with these letters has a prefix: in "uncle" or "rest", there's no root word left.

3 Practise

A. Draw lines to match each prefix to its meaning.

re- ●	● under, below
pre- ●	● wrongly
sub- ●	● again
mis- ●	● before

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B. Add **un-**, **dis-** or **mis-** to make a real word.

_____agree _____lucky _____behave

_____appear _____spell _____well

C. Use the prefix to write what each word means.

1 **rewrite** means _____

2 **preview** means _____

3 **submarine** means _____

4 **misplace** means _____

D. Write a sentence using a word with the prefix **dis-** and one with **re-**.

_____

_____

Challenge

Mia says: **"I unagree with you!"** Is that right? What should she say, and how could she remember?

_____

I can... Tick when you can.

- [ ] say what un-, dis-, mis-, re-, pre- and sub- mean
- [ ] add a prefix without changing the root word's spelling
- [ ] work out a new word's meaning from its prefix